



NEWS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation
Los Angeles Field Office
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Former Downey Man Sentenced to Federal Prison for Tax Fraud Scheme

*Defendant and his Son used the Identities of Puerto Rican Residents to File
Fraudulent Tax Returns with the IRS*

Los Angeles – A former Downey resident was sentenced today to 21 months in federal prison for his participation in a scheme which caused fraudulent tax returns in the names of Puerto Rican residents to be submitted to the Internal Revenue Service claiming false refunds.

Benjamin Demetrio, who also uses the name Antero Diaz-Diaz, 67, was sentenced this morning by United States District Judge S. James Otero, who also ordered the defendant to pay restitution of \$293,719 to the IRS.

Demetrio pleaded guilty in October to one count of conspiracy to defraud the United States with respect to claims.

According to the plea agreement, during the years 2007 and 2008, Demetrio along with his son, Ulises Demetrio Rivera, rented private mail boxes at various locations in Southern California using false identification documents. The co-defendants further listed the names of Puerto Rican residents as persons authorized to receive mail at the boxes that were rented.

Subsequently, approximately 537 IRS tax returns in the names of approximately 157 individuals were filed with the IRS for the tax years 2004 through 2006, seeking earned income tax refunds based on the miscellaneous income reported and the number of dependents claimed on the tax returns. As a result of these filings, the IRS issued and mailed approximately \$293,719 in tax refund checks to the private mail boxes rented by Demetrio and his son.

In July 2008, a search of Demetrio's residence in Downey and a storage unit rented by the defendant revealed documents listing the names, dates of birth and social security numbers of individuals who were authorized recipients of mail on the mail boxes and had a false tax return filed using their name. Also found were false identification documents bearing Demetrio's photograph.

Demetrio's co-defendant and son, Ulises Demetrio Rivera, pled guilty to both conspiracy and aggravated identity theft. He was sentenced in July to a term of 36 months imprisonment and also ordered to pay restitution of \$293,719.

The investigation of Demetrio and his son was conducted by IRS Criminal Investigation in conjunction with the United States Attorney's Office for the Central District of California.

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